

Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act (UAA)

On January 14, 2013, President Obama signed the Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act (UAA), which applies the Hague Accreditation and Approval requirements to all agencies and persons providing “adoptions services” in cases where a child immigrates to or emigrates from the United States for purposes of adoption. Agencies have 18 months from the date the Act was signed to successfully achieve Hague Accreditation.

The Council on Accreditation (COA) is an international, independent, not-for-profit, child- and family-service and behavioral healthcare accrediting organization—including organizations that provide intercountry adoption services. COA is the only recognized accreditor to accredit agencies and approve persons under the requirements of UAA. As such, if an organization in your state is currently Hague Accredited through COA, they have already established the necessary policies, procedures and processes to comply with the mandate. However, non-Hague accredited organizations that provide international adoption services will need to achieve Hague accreditation to comply with federal law.

In accordance with the UAA and 22 CFR Part 96.12, effective July 14, 2014, an agency or person may not offer, provide, or facilitate the provision of any adoption service in the United States in connection with an international adoption unless it is:

1. An accredited agency or an approved person;
2. A supervised provider; or
3. An exempted provider.

If you would like definitions of the above mentioned terms, please access our [glossary](#).

Please note that the UAA includes a transition provision for certain cases that are in process prior to July 14, 2013.

To learn more about Hague Accreditation and to receive additional information regarding UAA, please feel free to contact me by email at zhutchinson@coanet.org or by phone at 866.262.8088, extension 242.

If you are interested in learning about the U.S. Department of State's information regarding intercountry adoption, please visit:

- [US Department of State's website](#)
- [US Department of State's Accreditation Information](#)
- [US Department of State's Agency Information on Accreditation including Technical Guidance on the Standards](#)
- [US Department of State's FAQs on Universal Accreditation](#)

For information regarding the Hague Accreditation/Approval process, please visit the following links on COA's website:

- [To learn about the Hague Accreditation/Approval Requirements and Process](#)
- [To search for Hague Accredited/Approved organizations and programs](#)
- [To learn about the costs of accreditation](#)
- [To review the Hague Standards](#)
- [A Guide to COA's Hague Accreditation Process and Tools for Hague Accreditation](#)

COA is proud to assist in ensuring that all intercountry adoptions in the United States remain safe for children, their biological families and prospective adoptive families.

Best,

Zoë Hutchinson



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Council on Accreditation

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